

Update 10/26/12 – 3:00 PM

Dear Westwood Residents,

The National Weather Service and National Hurricane Center advises of the potential for a serious storm event to reach our area beginning Sunday and extending into Monday and Tuesday with heavy winds and sustained rainfall. With predictions for Hurricane Sandy to have a severe impact on New Jersey, the Westwood Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is working in conjunction with Bergen County OEM and the State of New Jersey OEM to monitor the track of the storm and make emergency preparations.

The Westwood DPW is checking and clearing catch basins throughout the Borough in anticipation of the storm. Residents should report any clogged catch basins to the DPW by Friday afternoon at 2 p.m. The number is 201-664-2349. **Residents are urged to help keep catch basins clear by not putting leaves into the street this weekend.**

Homeowners should be sure to remove any loose branches, and ensure that gutters and leaders are clear of debris.

PSE&G has notified the Borough of its preparations to provide emergency service. Should Hurricane Sandy hit New Jersey, electric and gas services may be impacted. PSE&G customers should call the Customer Service line at 1-800-436-PSEG to report downed wires or power outages. This is an automated system designed to route calls to the right destination quickly, so please do not be deterred by the answering system.

Borough Officials are working with our State representatives to request the advance release of water from area reservoirs both in NJ and across the border in NY. This morning I traveled to Drumthwacket, the Governor's residence in Princeton, to meet personally with NJDEP Commissioner Bob Martin and members of the Governor's Cabinet. We discussed reservoir levels in Northern NJ and efforts to reduce levels in advance of the impending storm. Commissioner Martin advised me that he was working on this with his staff and would be monitoring the storm progress. He advised that he would be keeping me updated. Assemblywoman Schepisi has been supportive of the efforts to work with our neighbors in New York State that they lower their reservoir levels immediately in anticipation of heavy precipitation.

As of this afternoon the water level of the Woodcliff Lake Reservoir is currently at 91.19 feet leaving slightly more than four feet of capacity. The Oradell Reservoir is currently at 18.02 feet, leaving more than five feet of available capacity. At these levels historical data allows us to plan that we will be able to withstand a rainfall with amounts up to three (3) inches of rain over a twenty-four hour period without serious flooding, and four (4) inches of rain over a twenty-four to thirty-six hour sustained precipitation event. Predictions have been made that our area may receive between five (5) and (8) inches of rainfall. Should that be the case, residents living in areas susceptible to flooding should expect localized flooding to occur.

As with every major storm and potential flooding event, the Borough's OEM, Police, Fire, EMS, and Public Works departments will be on duty to safeguard the Borough's residents. Residents living in areas susceptible to flooding are urged to take all necessary precautions to protect their homes and make advance arrangements should evacuation become necessary. If you have not signed up to receive the Borough's emergency notifications by email or phone, please take a moment right now to do so on the Borough Website Home Page. Updates will be posted on the Borough's Home Page as information becomes available. Residents are urged to monitor the weather reports, and make appropriate decisions regarding the safety of their families.

Thank you,

Borough of Westwood

John Birkner, Jr. - Mayor